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SOCIALISM AND WAR

By

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and

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V. I. LENIN

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1. The Teachings of Karl Marx
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In Preparation

"Left" Communism: An Infantile Disorder

Historical Materialism

The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky

Two Tactics of the Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution

The National Question

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FOREWORD TO FIRST FOREIGN EDITION

THE war has been going on for a year. Our party made clear its attitude towards the war at its very beginning in the Manifesto of the Central Committee written in September, 1914, and after conveying it to the Central Committee members and the responsible representatives of our party in Russia, and obtaining their approval published it, November 1, 1914, in No. 33 of the Central Organ of our party, the *Sotsial-Demokrat.** Later, in No. 40 (March 29, 1915) there were published the resolutions of the Berne Conference which express more precisely our principles and our tactics.**

There is at present evident in Russia a growing revolutionary sentiment among the masses. In other countries there are also signs of a similar phenomenon, notwithstanding the smothering of the revolutionary tendencies of the proletariat by a majority of the official Social-Democratic parties, which have taken the side of their governments and their bourgeoisie. This state of affairs makes it particularly urgent to publish a pamphlet which summarises Social-Democratic tactics in relation to the war. In reprinting in full the above-mentioned party documents, we have supplied them with brief explanations, attempting to take stock of the main arguments expressed in literature and in party gatherings for bourgeois and proletarian tactics.

G. ZINOVIEV.
N. LENIN.

GENEVA, *August*, 1915.

* See V. I. Lenin, *The War and the Second International*, Little Lenin Library, No. 2, pp. 56-63.—*Ed.*

** See V. I. Lenin, *The Imperialist War*, Collected Works, Vol. XVIII, pp. 145-150.—*Ed.*

FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION

THE present pamphlet was written in the summer of 1915 on the very eve of the Zimmerwald Conference. It also appeared in German and French, and was reprinted in full in the Norwegian language in the organ of the Norwegian Social-Democratic Youth. The German edition of the pamphlet was illegally transported into Germany, to Berlin, Leipzig, Bremen, and other cities, where it was distributed by the adherents of the Zimmerwald Left and Karl Liebknecht's group. The French edition was illegally printed in Paris and distributed there by the French Zimmerwaldists. The Russian edition reached Russia in a very limited number of copies, and was hand-copied by Moscow workers.

We now reprint the pamphlet in full, as a document. The reader must remember that the pamphlet was written in August, 1915. It is particularly necessary to remember this in connection with the passages dealing with Russia. Russia then was still tsarist, Romanov Russia.*

* This Foreword was written for the first legal edition of the pamphlet published in Russia in 1918 by the Petrograd Soviet.—*Ed.*

SOCIALISM AND WAR

CHAPTER I

PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM AND THE WAR OF 1914-1915

ATTITUDE OF SOCIALISTS TOWARDS WAR

THE Socialists have always condemned wars between peoples as barbarous and bestial. Our attitude towards war, however, differs in principle from that of the bourgeois pacifists and Anarchists. We differ from the first in that we understand the inseparable connection between wars on the one hand and class struggles inside of a country on the other, we understand the impossibility of eliminating wars without eliminating classes and creating Socialism, and in that we fully recognise the justice, the progressivism and the necessity of civil wars, *i.e.*, wars of an oppressed class against the oppressor, of slaves against the slave-holders, of serfs against the landowners, of wage-workers against the bourgeoisie. We Marxists differ both from pacifists and Anarchists in that we recognise the necessity of an historical study of each war individually, from the point of view of Marx's dialectical materialism. There have been many wars in history which, notwithstanding all the horrors, cruelties, miseries and tortures, inevitably connected with every war, had a progressive character, *i. e.*, they served the development of mankind, aiding in the destruction of extremely pernicious and reactionary institutions (as, for instance, absolutism or serfdom), or helping to remove the most barbarous despotisms in Europe (that of Turkey and Russia). It is therefore necessary to examine the historic characteristics of the present war taken by itself.

TYPES OF WAR IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN TIMES

A new epoch in the history of mankind was opened by the great French Revolution. From that time down to the Paris Commune, *i. e.*, from 1789 to 1871, some of the wars had a bourgeois progres-

sive character, being waged for national liberation. In other words, the main contents and the historic significance of those wars consisted in overthrowing absolutism and feudalism, at least in undermining those institutions, or in casting off the yoke of foreign nations. Therefore these wars can be considered progressive. When such wars were waged, all honest revolutionary democrats as well as Socialists always sympathised with that side (*i. e.*, with that bourgeoisie) which helped to overthrow or at least to undermine the most dangerous foundations of feudalism and absolutism, or to combat the oppression of foreign peoples. For instance, the fundamental historic significance of the revolutionary wars of France, notwithstanding the tendency to plunder and conquer foreign lands on the part of the French, consists in the fact that they shook and destroyed feudalism and absolutism in the whole of old Europe hitherto based on serf labour. In the Franco-Prussian War, Germany certainly robbed France; this, however, does not change the fundamental historic significance of that war as having freed tens of millions of the German people from feudal decentralisation and from the oppression of two despots, the Tsar and Napoleon III.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE WAR

The period between 1789 and 1871 left deep traces and revolutionary reminiscences. Before the overthrow of feudalism, absolutism, and foreign oppression, there could be no thought of developing the proletarian struggle for Socialism. When, in speaking of the wars of *such* periods, the Socialists always recognised the justice of a "defensive" war, they had in view the above aims, namely, a revolution against medievalism and serf labour. Under a "defensive" war the Socialists always understood a "just" war in this particular sense. (Wilhelm Liebknecht once expressed himself in this very way.) Only in this sense did the Socialists recognise, and do recognise at present, the legitimacy, progressivism, and justice of "defending the fatherland" or of a "defensive" war. For instance, if Morocco were to declare war against France to-morrow, or India against England, or Persia or China against Russia, etc., those wars would be "just," "defensive" wars, no matter which one was the first to attack. Every Socialist would then wish the victory of the oppressed, dependent, non-sovereign states against the oppressing, slave-holding, pillaging "great" nations.

But imagine that a slave-holder possessing 100 slaves wages war against a slave-holder possessing 200 slaves for a more "equitable" redistribution of slaves. It is evident that to apply to such a case the term "defensive" war or "defence of the fatherland," would be an historical lie; in practice it would mean that the crafty slave-holders were plainly deceiving the unenlightened masses, the lower strata of the city population. It is in this very fashion that the present-day imperialist bourgeoisie, when war is waged among the slave-holders for the strengthening and consolidation of slavery, deceive the peoples by means of the "national" ideology and the idea of defence of the fatherland.

THE PRESENT WAR IS AN IMPERIALIST WAR

Nearly every one admits the present war to be an imperialist war. In most cases, however, this term is either distorted, or applied to one side only, or a loophole is left for the assertion that the war is a bourgeois-progressive means for national liberation. Imperialism is the highest stage in the development of capitalism, one that has been reached only in the twentieth century. Capitalism began to feel cramped within the old national states, without the formation of which it could not overthrow feudalism. Capitalism has brought about such economic concentration that entire branches of industry are in the hands of syndicates, trusts, or corporations of billionaires; almost the entire globe has been parceled out among the "giants of capital," either in the form of colonies, or through the entangling of foreign countries by thousands of threads of financial exploitation. Free trade and competition have been superseded by tendencies towards monopoly, towards seizure of lands for the investment of capital, for the export of raw materials, etc. Capitalism, formerly a liberator of nations, has now, in its imperialist stage, become the greatest oppressor of nations. Formerly progressive, it has become a reactionary force. It has developed the productive forces to such an extent that humanity must either pass over to Socialism, or for years, nay, decades, witness armed conflicts of the "great" nations for an artificial maintenance of capitalism by means of colonies, monopolies, privileges, and all sorts of national oppression.

Division of the World among the "Great" Slave-holding Nations

"Great Powers"	Colonies				Mother Countries		Total	
	1876		1914		1914			
	Sq. Km.	Pop.	Sq. Km.	Pop.	Sq. Km.	Pop.	Sq. Km.	Pop.
				(in millions)				
England	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5	0.3	46.5	33.8	440.0
Russia	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2	5.4	136.2	22.8	169.4
France	0.9	6.0	10.6	55.5	0.5	39.9	11.1	95.1
Germany	——	——	2.9	12.3	0.5	64.9	3.4	77.2
Japan	——	——	0.3	19.2	0.4	53.0	0.7	72.2
U. S. A.	——	——	0.3	9.7	9.4	97.0	9.7	106.7
Totals:								
Six "Great" Powers	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	19.5	437.2	81.5	960.6
Colonies belonging to Non-Great Powers (Belgium, Holland, etc.)							9.9	45.3
Three "Semi-Colonial" Countries (Turkey, China and Persia)							14.5	361.2
						Grand Total	105.9	1,367.1
All other States and Countries							28.0	289.9
The whole globe (except the Polar Regions)							133.9	1,657.0

WAR AMONG THE GREATEST SLAVE-HOLDERS FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND STRENGTHENING OF SLAVERY

To make the meaning of imperialism clear, we will quote exact figures showing the division of the world among the so-called "great" nations, (*i. e.*, nations successful in the great robbery). [See p. 12.—*Ed.*]

It is evident that the peoples who, between 1789 and 1871, were usually the foremost fighters for freedom, have become, after 1876, under highly-developed and "over-ripe" capitalism, the oppressors and subjugators of the majority of the populations and nations of the entire globe. Between 1876 and 1914, the six "great" nations grabbed 25,000,000 square kilometres, *i. e.*, a territory two and a half times the size of Europe. The six nations hold enslaved *more than a half-billion* (523,000,000) of colonial peoples. For every four inhabitants of the "great" nations, there are five inhabitants in "their" colonies. Everybody knows that the colonies were conquered by fire and sword, that the colonial populations are treated in a barbarous fashion, that they are exploited in a thousand ways, such as exportation of capital, concessions, etc., deceptions in selling commodities, submission to the authorities of the "ruling" nation, and so on, and so forth. The Anglo-French bourgeoisie is deceiving the people when it says that it wages war for the freedom of peoples, including Belgium; in reality, it wages war for the sake of holding on to the colonies which it has stolen on a large scale. The German imperialists would free Belgium, etc., forthwith, were the English and the French willing to share with them the colonies on the basis of "justice." It is a peculiarity of the present situation that the fate of the colonies is being decided by war on the continent. From the standpoint of bourgeois justice and national freedom, which means the right of nations to exist, Germany could unquestionably have a just claim against England and France, because it has been "wronged" as far as its share of colonies is concerned, because its enemies are oppressing more nations than Germany, and because under its ally, Austria, the oppressed Slavs are enjoying decidedly more freedom than in tsarist Russia, this veritable "prison of the peoples." Germany itself, however, is waging war, not for the liberation, but for the oppression of nations. It is not the business of Socialists to help the younger and stronger robber (Germany) to rob the older and fatter bandits, but the Socialists must utilise the

struggle between the bandits to overthrow all of them. For this reason the Socialists must first of all tell the people the truth, namely, that this war is in three senses a war of slave-holders for the strengthening of the worst kind of slavery. It is a war, first, for the strengthening of colonial slavery by means of a more "equitable" division of the colonies and more "team work" in their exploitation; it is, secondly, a war for the strengthening of the oppression of minority nationalities inside the "great" nations, since Austria and Russia (Russia much more and in a much worse manner than Austria) are based on such oppression which is strengthened by the war; third, it is a war for the strengthening and prolongation of wage slavery, the proletariat being divided and subdued while the capitalists are gaining through war profits, through fanning national prejudices, and deepening the reaction which has raised its head in all countries, even in the freest and republican countries.

"WAR IS POLITICS CONTINUED BY OTHER (*i. e.*, FORCIBLE) MEANS"

This famous dictum belongs to one of the profoundest writers on military questions, Clausewitz. Rightly, the Marxists have always considered this axiom as the theoretical foundation for their understanding of the meaning of every war. It is from this very standpoint that Marx and Engels regarded wars.

Apply this idea to the present war. You will find that for decades, for almost half a century, the governments and the ruling classes of England, France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Russia, conducted a policy of colonial robbery, of suppressing labour movements, of oppressing foreign nations. Such a policy, and no other one, is being pursued also in the present war. Notably in Austria and in Russia the policy of both peace and war times consists in the enslavement of nations, not in their liberation. On the contrary, in China, Persia, India and other dependent nations we note in the last decade a policy of national awakening, tens and hundreds of millions of people striving to liberate themselves from under the yoke of the reactionary "great" nations. War growing out of this historic basis, even at the present time, can be of a bourgeois progressive nature, a war for national liberation.

One glance at the present war, conceived as a continuation of the policy of the "great" nations and their fundamental classes, shows

that the opinion which justifies "defence of the fatherland" in the present war is false, hypocritical and in glaring contradiction to historic facts.

EXAMPLE OF BELGIUM

The social-chauvinists of the Triple (now Quadruple) Entente (in Russia, Plekhanov and Co.) love to refer to the example of Belgium. This example speaks against them. The German imperialists shamelessly violated Belgian neutrality; this has always and everywhere been the practice of warring nations which, in the case of necessity, trample upon *all* treaties and obligations. Suppose all nations interested in maintaining international treaties declared war against Germany, demanding the liberation and indemnification of Belgium. In this case the sympathy of the Socialists would naturally be on the side of Germany's enemies. The truth, however, is that the war is being waged by the "Triple" (and Quadruple) Entente *not* for the sake of Belgium. This is well known, and only the hypocrites conceal it. England is robbing German colonies and Turkey; Russia is robbing Galicia and Turkey; France is striving to obtain Alsace-Lorraine and even the left bank of the Rhine; a treaty providing the sharing of spoils (in Albania and Asia Minor) has been concluded with Italy; with Bulgaria and Rumania there is haggling as to the division of the spoils. In the present war, conducted by the present governments, it is impossible to help Belgium without helping to throttle Austria or Turkey, etc. What meaning, then, has the "defence of the fatherland"? This is the peculiar characteristic of the imperialist war, a war between reactionary bourgeois governments that have historically outlived themselves, conducted for the sake of oppressing other nations. Whoever justifies participation in this war, perpetuates imperialist oppression of nations. Whoever seeks to use the present difficulties of the governments in order to fight for a social revolution, is fighting for the real freedom of really all nations, a freedom that can be realised only under Socialism.

WHAT IS RUSSIA FIGHTING FOR?

In Russia, modern capitalist imperialism has clearly manifested itself in the policy of tsarism relative to Persia, Manchuria and Mongolia; in general, however, the prevailing type of Russian im-

perialism is military and feudal. Nowhere in the world is there such an oppression of the majority of the country's population as there is in Russia: the Great-Russians form only 43 per cent of the population, *i. e.*, less than half; the rest have no rights as belonging to other nationalities. Out of 170,000,000 of the population of Russia, *about 100,000,000* are oppressed and without rights. The tsarist government wages war for the seizure of Galicia and the final throttling of the freedom of the Ukrainians, for the seizure of Armenia, Constantinople, etc. Tsarism sees in this war a means to distract the attention from the growing discontent within the country and to suppress the growing revolutionary movement. For every two Great-Russians in present-day Russia, there are between two and three "aliens" without rights. In waging this war tsarism strives to increase the number of nations oppressed by Russia, to perpetuate their oppression and subsequently to undermine the struggle for freedom of the Great-Russians themselves. The opportunity of suppressing and robbing foreign peoples spells economic stagnation, since it often substitutes semi-feudal exploitation of the "aliens" as a source of income for the development of productive forces. It is for this reason that, as far as Russia is concerned, the war is doubly reactionary and hostile to national liberation.

WHAT IS SOCIAL-CHAUVINISM?

Social-chauvinism is adherence to the idea of "defending the fatherland" in the present war. From this idea follows repudiation of the class struggle in war time, voting for military appropriations, etc. In practice the social-chauvinists conduct an anti-proletarian bourgeois policy, because in practice they insist not on the "defence of the fatherland" in the sense of fighting against the oppression of a foreign nation, but upon the "right" of one or the other of the "great" nations to rob the colonies and oppress other peoples. The social-chauvinists follow the bourgeoisie in deceiving the people by saying that the war is conducted for the defence of the freedom and the existence of the nations; thus they put themselves on the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. To the social-chauvinists belong those who justify and idealise the governments and the bourgeoisie of *one* of the belligerent groups of nations, as well as those who, like Kautsky, recognise the equal right of the Socialists of *all* belligerent nations to "defend the fatherland."

Social-chauvinism, being in practice a defence of the privileges, prerogatives, robberies and violence of "one's own" (or any other) imperialist bourgeoisie, is a total betrayal of all Socialist convictions and a violation of the decisions of the International Socialist Congress in Basle.

THE BASLE MANIFESTO

The war manifesto unanimously adopted in 1912 in Basle has in view the kind of war between England and Germany with their present allies which actually broke out in 1914. The manifesto declares unequivocally that no people's interests of whatever nature can justify such a war, it being conducted "for the profits of capitalists" and "the ambitions of dynasties" as an outgrowth of the imperialist predatory policy of the great nations. The manifesto plainly states that the war is dangerous "for the governments" (all governments without exception); it notes their fear "of a proletarian revolution"; it refers with full clarity to the example of the Commune of 1871 and of October-December, 1905, *i. e., to the example of revolution and civil war.* The Basle Manifesto thus establishes for this present war the tactics of workers' revolutionary struggle on an international scale against their governments, the tactics of proletarian revolution. The Basle Manifesto repeats the words of the Stuttgart resolution to the effect that in case of war the Socialists must take advantage of the "economic and political crisis" created by it to "hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule," *i. e.*, to take advantage of the difficulties of the governments and of mass indignation created by the war to advance the Socialist revolution.

The policy of the social-chauvinists, their justification of the war from the bourgeois standpoint of national liberty, their acceptance of the "defence of the fatherland," their voting for war appropriations, their participation in the cabinets, etc., etc., is a direct betrayal of Socialism. As we shall see below, it can be explained only by the triumph of opportunism and of national-liberal labour policy inside of the majority of the European parties.

FALSE REFERENCES TO MARX AND ENGELS

The Russian social-chauvinists (headed by Plekhanov) refer to Marx's tactics in the war of 1870. The German chauvinists (of the

type of Lensch, David and Co.) refer to Engels, who in 1891 declared that it would be the duty of the German Socialists to defend their fatherland in case of a war against Russia and France combined. Finally, the social-chauvinists of the Kautsky type, wishing to justify and sanction international chauvinism, quote both Marx and Engels who, while denouncing wars, always sided with one or the other of the belligerent governments, once the war had actually broken out, as was the case in 1854-1855, 1870-1871 and 1876-1877.

All these references are an abominable distortion of Marx's and Engels' views, made in favour of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists, just as the writings of the Anarchists, Guillaume and Co., distort the views of Marx and Engels for the justification of Anarchism. The war of 1870-1871 was historically progressive on Germany's side up to the defeat of Napoleon III, because both he and the Tsar had long oppressed Germany, keeping it in a state of feudal decentralisation. As soon as the war turned into a plunder of France (annexation of Alsace and Lorraine), Marx and Engels decisively condemned the Germans. Even at the beginning of the war of 1870-1871 Marx and Engels approved of Bebel's and Liebknecht's refusal to vote for military appropriations; they advised the Social-Democrats not to merge with the bourgeoisie, but to defend the independent class-interests of the proletariat. To apply the characterisation of the Franco-Prussian War, which was of a bourgeois progressive nature and fought for national liberty, to the present imperialist war, is to mock at history. The same is even more true about the war of 1854-1855 and all other wars of the nineteenth century, *i. e.*, a time *when there was no modern imperialism, no ripe objective conditions for Socialism, no mass Socialist parties in all the belligerent countries, i. e.*, when there were none of those conditions from which the Basle Manifesto deduced the tactics of a "proletarian revolution" in the case of a war's arising among the great nations.

Whoever refers at present to Marx's attitude towards the wars of a period when the bourgeoisie was *progressive*, forgetting Marx's words that "the workers have no fatherland," words which refer to a *period when the bourgeoisie is reactionary and has outlived itself*, to the period of Socialist revolutions, is shamelessly distorting Marx and substituting a bourgeois for a Socialist standpoint.

The Socialists of the whole world solemnly declared in 1912, in Basle, that they considered the coming European war a "criminal" and reactionary undertaking of *all* the governments, an undertaking which must hasten the breakdown of capitalism by inevitably generating a revolution against it. The war came, the crisis was there. Instead of revolutionary tactics, the majority of the Social-Democratic parties followed reactionary tactics, siding with their governments and their respective bourgeoisies. This betrayal of Socialism means the collapse of the Second (1889-1914) International. We must make clear to ourselves the causes of that collapse, the reasons for the birth and growth of social-chauvinism.

SOCIAL-CHAUVINISM IS OPPORTUNISM BROUGHT TO COMPLETION

During the entire period of the Second International, a struggle was going on everywhere inside of the Social-Democratic parties between the revolutionary and the opportunist wings. In a series of countries there was a split along this line (England, Italy, Holland, Bulgaria). There was no doubt in the mind of any Marxist that opportunism expressed a bourgeois policy inside of the labour movement, that it expressed the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and of the alliance of an insignificant section of bourgeois-like workers with "their own" bourgeoisie against the interests of the mass of proletarians, the mass of the oppressed.

The objective conditions at the end of the nineteenth century were such that they strengthened opportunism, turning the use of legal bourgeois opportunities into servile worship of legalism, creating a thin layer of bureaucracy and aristocracy in the working class, attracting to the ranks of the Social-Democratic parties many petty-bourgeois "fellow travellers."

The war hastened this development; it turned opportunism into social-chauvinism; it changed the alliance of the opportunists with the bourgeoisie from a secret to an open one. At the same time, the military authorities everywhere introduced martial law and muzzled the working mass, whose old leaders, almost in a body, went over to the bourgeoisie.

The economic basis of opportunism and social-chauvinism is the

same: the interests of an insignificant layer of privileged workers and petty bourgeoisie who are defending their privileged positions, their "right" to the crumbs of profits which "their" national bourgeoisie receives from robbing other nations, from the advantages of its position as a great nation.

The ideological and political contents of opportunism and social-chauvinism is the same: class collaboration instead of class struggle; renunciation of revolutionary means of struggle; aiding "one's" own government in its difficulties instead of taking advantage of its difficulties to work for a revolution. If we take all European countries as a whole, if we look not at individual persons (however authoritative), it appears that the opportunist ideology has become the mainstay of social-chauvinism, whereas from the camp of the revolutionists we hear almost everywhere more or less consistent protests against it. If we take, for instance, the division of opinion manifested at the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress of 1907, we find that international Marxism was against imperialism while international opportunism was even then already for it.

UNITY WITH THE OPPORTUNISTS IS AN ALLIANCE OF THE WORKERS WITH "THEIR" NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE AND A SPLIT IN THE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY WORKING CLASS

During the period that preceded the war, opportunism was often considered a legitimate component part of a Social-Democratic party, though "deviating" and "extreme." The war has proven the inadmissibility of this combination in the future. Opportunism has ripened, it has brought to completion its role of an emissary of the bourgeoisie within the labour movement. Unity with the opportunists has become nothing but hypocrisy, as evidenced by the example of the German Social-Democratic Party. On all important occasions (as at the voting of August 4) the opportunists confront the party with their ultimatum, the acceptance of which is secured through their numerous connections with the bourgeoisie, through their majorities on the executive committees of the labour unions, etc. To keep *united* with opportunism at the present time means *practically* to subjugate the working class to "its" bourgeoisie, to make an alliance with it for the oppression of other nations and for the

struggle for the privileges of a great nation; at the same time it means splitting the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.

However difficult it may be in individual cases to fight the opportunists who occupy a leading position in many organisations; whatever peculiar forms the process of purging the labour parties of the opportunists may assume in various countries, this process is inevitable and fruitful. Reformist Socialism is dying; regenerating Socialism "will be revolutionary, non-compromising, rebellious," according to the just expression of the French Socialist, Paul Golay.

KAUTSKYISM

Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, represents the most typical and striking example of how lip service to Marxism has in reality led to its transformation into "Struveism" or "Brentanoism." Plekhanov represents a similar example. Those people castrate Marxism; they purge it, by means of obvious sophisms, of its revolutionary living soul; they recognise in Marxism *everything except* revolutionary means of struggle, except the advocacy of, and the preparation for, such struggle, and the education of the masses in this direction. Kautsky quite meaninglessly "reconciles" the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, the defence of the fatherland in this war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Left, such as abstaining from voting appropriations, verbal expression of opposition, etc. Kautsky, who in 1909 wrote a book * predicting the approach of a revolutionary period and discussing the relation between war and revolution, Kautsky, who in 1912 signed the Basle Manifesto on revolutionary utilisation of the coming war, now justifies and embellishes social-chauvinism in every way. Like Plekhanov, he joins the bourgeoisie in ridiculing the very idea of revolution, in repudiating every step towards immediate revolutionary struggle.

The working class cannot realise its revolutionary role, which is of world significance, otherwise than by waging a merciless war against this desertion of principles, this supineness, this servility to opportunism and this unexampled theoretical vulgarisation of Marxism. Kautskyism is not an accident but a social product of the con-

* *Der Weg zur Macht* (English translation—*The Road to Power*).—*Ed.*

tradictions within the Second International which combined faithfulness to Marxism in words with submission to opportunism in deeds.

In every country this fundamental falsehood of Kautskyism assumes different forms. In Holland, Roland-Holst, though rejecting the idea of defence of the fatherland, is supporting unity with the party of the opportunists. In Russia, Trotsky, apparently repudiating this idea, also fights for unity with the opportunist and chauvinist group *Nasha Zarya*. In Rumania, Rakovsky, declaring war against opportunism which he blames for the collapse of the International, is at the same time ready to recognise the legitimacy of the idea of the defence of the fatherland. These are manifestations of the evil which the Dutch Marxists Gorter and Pannekoek have named "passive radicalism" and which reduces itself to substituting eclecticism for revolutionary Marxism in theory and to slavishness or impotence in the face of opportunism in practice.

THE SLOGAN OF MARXISTS IS THE SLOGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

The war has undoubtedly created the acutest crisis and has incredibly intensified the sufferings of the masses. The reactionary character of this war, the shameless lie of the bourgeoisie of *all* countries which covers its predatory aims with "national" ideology, all this inevitably creates, on the basis of an objective revolutionary situation, revolutionary sentiments in the masses. Our duty is to help make these sentiments conscious, to deepen them and give them form. The only correct expression of this task is the slogan "Turn the imperialist war into civil war." *All* consistent class struggle in time of war, all "mass actions" earnestly conducted must inevitably lead to this. We cannot know whether in the first or in the second imperialist war between the great nations, whether during or after it, a strong revolutionary movement will flare up. Whatever the case may be, it is our absolute duty systematically and unflinchingly to work in that particular direction.

The Basle Manifesto directly refers to the example of the Paris Commune, *i. e.*, to turning a war between governments into civil war. Half a century ago, the proletariat was too weak; objective conditions for Socialism had not ripened yet; a co-ordination and

co-operation of the revolutionary movements in all the belligerent countries could not take place; the fact that a section of the Paris workers was captivated by "national ideology" (traditions of 1792) was its petty-bourgeois weakness noted at the time by Marx, and one of the reasons for the collapse of the Commune. Now, half a century later, all the conditions that weakened the revolution are no more. At the present time it is unforgivable for a Socialist to countenance repudiation of activities in the spirit of the Paris Communards.

EXAMPLE OF FRATERNISATION IN THE TRENCHES

The bourgeois papers of all the belligerent countries have quoted examples of fraternisation between the soldiers of the belligerent nations, even in the trenches. The fact that the military authorities of Germany and England have issued severe orders against such fraternisation proves that the government and the bourgeoisie consider it of serious importance. If at a time when opportunism among the leaders of the Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe is supreme and social-chauvinism is supported by the entire Social-Democratic press as well as by all influential figures of the Second International, such cases of fraternisation are possible, how much nearer could we bring the end of this criminal, reactionary and slave-driving war and the organisation of a revolutionary international movement if systematic work were conducted in this direction, at least by the Left Socialists of all the belligerent countries!

IMPORTANCE OF ILLEGAL ORGANISATIONS

Like the opportunists, the most eminent Anarchists of the world have covered themselves in this war with the shame of social-chauvinism in the spirit of Plekhanov and Kautsky. One of its useful results, however, will undoubtedly be the death of both opportunism and Anarchism in this war. The Social-Democratic parties, in no case and under no conditions refusing to take advantage of the slightest legal possibility for the organisation of the masses and the preaching of Socialism, must do away with a servile attitude towards legalism. "Be the first to shoot, Messrs. Bourgeois!" Engels wrote in reference to civil war, pointing out the necessity

for us to violate legality *after* it has been violated by the bourgeoisie. The crisis has shown that the bourgeoisie is violating legality in every country, including the freest, and that it is impossible to lead the masses towards revolution without creating an illegal organisation for preaching, discussing, analysing, preparing revolutionary means of struggle. In Germany, for instance, all *honest* activities of the Socialists are being conducted against abject opportunism and hypocritical "Kautskyism," and conducted illegally. In England, men are being sentenced to hard labour for appeals to abstain from joining the army.

To think that membership in a Social-Democratic party is compatible with repudiation of illegal methods of propaganda and the ridicule of them in the legal press is to betray Socialism.

DEFEAT OF "ONE'S OWN" GOVERNMENT IN IMPERIALIST WAR

The advocates of victory of "one's own" government in the present war, as well as the advocates of the slogan "Neither victory nor defeat," proceed equally from the standpoint of social-chauvinism. A revolutionary class in a reactionary war cannot help wishing the defeat of its government, it cannot fail to see the connection between the government's military reverses and the increased opportunity for overthrowing it. Only a bourgeois who believes that the war started by the governments will necessarily end as a war between governments, and who wishes it to be so, finds "ridiculous" or "absurd" the idea that the Socialists of *all* the belligerent countries should express their wish that *all* "their" governments be defeated. On the contrary, such expression would coincide with the hidden thoughts of every class-conscious worker, and would lie along the line of our activity which tends to turn the imperialist war into civil war.

An earnest anti-war propaganda by a section of the English, German and Russian Socialists would undoubtedly "weaken the military strength" of the respective governments, but such propaganda would be to the credit of the Socialists. The Socialists must explain to the masses that there is no salvation for them outside of a revolutionary overthrow of "their" governments and that the difficulties of those governments in the present war must be taken advantage of for just this purpose.

A mass sentiment for peace often expresses the beginning of a protest, an indignation and a consciousness of the reactionary nature of the war. It is the duty of all Social-Democrats to take advantage of this sentiment. They will take the most ardent part in every movement and in every demonstration made on this basis, but they will not deceive the people by assuming that in the absence of a revolutionary movement it is possible to have peace without annexations, without the oppression of nations, without robbery, without planting the seed of new wars among the present governments and the ruling classes. Such deception would only play into the hands of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent countries and their counter-revolutionary plans. Whoever wishes a durable and democratic peace must be for civil war against the governments and the bourgeoisie.

RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

The most widespread deception of the people by the bourgeoisie in the present war consists in hiding its predatory aims under an ideology of "national liberation." The English promise freedom to Belgium, the Germans to Poland, etc. As we have seen, this is in reality a war of the oppressors of the majority of the nations of the world for the deepening and widening of such oppression.

The Socialists cannot reach their great aim without fighting against every form of national oppression. They must therefore unequivocally demand that the Social-Democrats of the *oppressing* countries (of the so-called "great" nations in particular) should recognise and defend the right of the *oppressed* nations to self-determination in the political sense of the word, *i. e.*, the right to political separation. A Socialist of a great nation or a nation possessing colonies who does not defend this right is a chauvinist.

To defend this right does in no way mean to encourage the formation of small states, but on the contrary it leads to a freer, more fearless and therefore wider and more universal formation of larger governments and unions of governments—a phenomenon more advantageous for the masses and more in accord with economic development.

On the other hand, the Socialists of the *oppressed* nations must

unequivocally fight for complete unity of the *workers* of both the oppressed and the oppressor nationalities (which also means organisational unity). The idea of a lawful separation between one nationality and the other (the so-called "national cultural autonomy" of Bauer and Renner) is a reactionary idea.

Imperialism is the period of an increasing oppression of the nations of the whole world by a handful of "great" nations; the struggle for a Socialist international revolution against imperialism is therefore impossible without the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination. "No people oppressing other peoples can be free" (Marx and Engels).* No proletariat reconciling itself to the least violation by "its" nation of the rights of other nations can be Socialist.

* Engels in *Volksstaat*, 1874, No. 69.—*Ed.*

CHAPTER II

CLASSES AND PARTIES IN RUSSIA

THE BOURGEOISIE AND THE WAR

In one respect the Russian government did not fall behind its European confrères: like them, it succeeded in deceiving "its" people on a grandiose scale. A gigantic, monstrous apparatus of lies and cunning fabrications was put to work in Russia to infect the masses with chauvinism, to create the idea that the tsarist government is waging a "just" war, that it unselfishly "defends its Slav brothers," etc.

The class of landowners and the upper strata of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie have ardently supported the military policy of the Tsar's government. They justly expect tremendous material advantages and privileges for themselves from the division of the Turkish and Austrian inheritance. Many congresses of these classes have already taken stock of the profits which would flow into their pockets after a victory of the tsarist army. Besides, the reactionaries understand very well that if anything can still postpone the fall of the Romanov monarchy and forestall a new revolution in Russia, it is a war won by the Tsar.

Large strata of the "middle" city bourgeoisie, of the bourgeois intelligentsia, of the members of liberal professions, etc., have also been infected by chauvinism, at least at the beginning of the war. The party of the Russian liberal bourgeoisie, the Constitutional-Democrats, has given full and unconditional support to the tsarist government. In the field of foreign politics, the Cadets have long been a government party. Panslavism, by means of which the Tsar's diplomacy more than once accomplished its grandiose political pettifoggings, has become the official ideology of the Cadets. Russian liberalism has degenerated into *national* liberalism. It vies with the Black Hundred in "patriotism"; it is always willing to vote for militarism, navalism, etc. In the camp of Russian liberalism, the same phenomenon can be observed which took place in the seventies in Germany when "liberty-loving" liberalism degenerated and gave birth to the National-Liberal Party. The Russian liberal

bourgeoisie has definitely placed itself on the road of counter-revolution. The point of view of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in this respect has thus been fully confirmed. Life has shattered the view of our opportunists that Russian liberalism is still a moving force of the revolution in Russia.

The ruling clique has also succeeded, by means of the bourgeois press, the clergy, etc., in creating a chauvinist sentiment among the peasantry. With the return of the soldiers from the battlefields, however, the mood of the village will undoubtedly undergo a change not in favour of the Tsar's monarchy. Bourgeois democratic parties in contact with the peasantry have not stood their ground against the chauvinist wave. The party of the Trudoviks in the Imperial Duma refused to vote military appropriations, but through the mouth of its leader Kerensky it made public a "patriotic" declaration which was of great service to the monarchy. All the legal press of the Narodniks [Populists—*Ed.*] has generally followed the liberals. Even the Left Wing of bourgeois democracy, the so-called Party of the Socialists-Revolutionists affiliated with the International Socialist Bureau, has swum with the current. The representative of this party in the International Socialist Bureau, Mr. H. Rubanovich, has openly appeared as a social-chauvinist. Half of the delegates of this party to the London conference of the Entente Socialists voted for a chauvinist resolution, the other half abstaining from voting. In the illegal press of the Socialists-Revolutionists (the paper *Novosti* [*News*], etc.), the chauvinists predominate. The revolutionists from among the bourgeoisie, *i. e.*, bourgeois revolutionists not connected with the working class, have suffered a cruel downfall in this war. The lamentable fate of Kropotkin, Burtsev, Rubanovich, is extremely significant.

THE WORKING CLASS AND THE WAR

The only class in Russia which the government and the bourgeoisie have not succeeded in inoculating with the plague of chauvinism, is the proletariat. Sporadic excesses at the beginning of the war attracted only the most backward strata of the workers. The participation of the workers in the unsightly Moscow riots against the Germans has been greatly exaggerated. By and large, the working class of Russia has proven immune against chauvinism.

The explanation lies, first, in the revolutionary situation that pre-

vails in the country; second, in the general conditions of the Russian proletariat.

The years 1912-1914 marked the beginning of a new, grandiose revolutionary upheaval in Russia. We again witnessed a great strike movement, the like of which the world does not know. A mass revolutionary strike in 1913 embraced, according to the most conservative estimate, a million and a half participants; in 1914 it exceeded two millions and was approaching the level of 1905. On the very eve of the war things reached a climax in St. Petersburg: the first barricade battles had begun.

The illegal Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has fulfilled its duty before the International. The banner of internationalism has not wavered in its hands. Our party has long severed organisational relations with the opportunist groups and elements. The ball and chain of opportunism and "legalism at any price" has not impeded the feet of our party. The circumstance has helped it to fulfil its revolutionary duty just as the split with the opportunist party of Bissolati has helped the Italian comrades.

The general situation in our country is unfavourable for the thriving of "Socialist" opportunism among the working masses. In Russia we see a series of shades of opportunism and reformism among the intelligentsia, the petty bourgeoisie, etc., but among the politically active strata of the workers the opportunists are an insignificant minority. The layer of privileged workers and office staffs is very thin in Russia; the fetishism of legality could not be created there. The Liquidators (party of opportunists led by Axelrod, Potresov, Cherevanin, Maslov, and others) had no serious support in the working masses prior to the war. The elections to the Fourth Imperial Duma resulted in *all* the six workers' Deputies being elected from among the opponents of Liquidationism. The circulation of, and the collections for, the legal workers' press in Petrograd and Moscow have proven beyond dispute that four-fifths of the class-conscious workers are marching against opportunism and Liquidationism.

Since the beginning of the war, the tsarist government has arrested and exiled thousands upon thousands of advanced workers, members of our illegal Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. This circumstance, together with the introduction of martial law in the country, with the closing down of our papers, etc., has halted

the movement. But the illegal revolutionary work of our party still continues. In Petrograd our party committee issues an illegal paper *Proletarsky Golos* [*Proletarian Voice*].

Articles from the Central Organ, the *Sotsial-Demokrat,* which appears abroad, are being reprinted in Petrograd and sent to the provincial towns. Illegal proclamations are published, and they are also distributed in the barracks. Illegal gatherings of workers are taking place outside of the city in various secret places. Recently, large strikes of metal workers started in Petrograd. In connection with these strikes our Petrograd committee has issued several appeals to the workers.

THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR FRACTION IN THE IMPERIAL DUMA AND THE WAR

In 1913, the Social-Democratic Deputies of the Imperial Duma split. On one side there appeared seven adherents of opportunism under the leadership of Chkheidze. They had been elected in seven non-proletarian provinces, where there were only 214,000 workers. On the other side there were six Deputies, all from the workers' electorate, elected in the industrial centres of Russia, where the number of workers was 1,008,000.

The main point of controversy was the tactics of revolutionary Marxism vs. the tactics of opportunist reformism. In practice, the disagreement manifested itself largely in the realm of extra-parliamentary work among the masses. In Russia this work had to be done illegally if those who did it wished to remain on revolutionary ground. Chkheidze's fraction proved a loyal ally of the Liquidators who repudiated illegal work; it defended them in every discussion with the workers, in every gathering. Hence the split, after which six Deputies formed the R.S.-D.L.P. Fraction. A year of work proved beyond dispute that behind this group stood an overwhelming majority of the Russian workers.

With the beginning of the war, the difference between the policies of the groups made itself manifest with extraordinary clarity. Chkheidze's group confined itself to the parliamentary field. It did not vote appropriations, since it would have roused a storm of indignation among the workers. (We have seen that, in Russia, even petty-bourgeois Trudoviks did not vote for the appropriations.) Neither did it protest against social-chauvinism.

The R.S.-D.L.P. Fraction, which expressed the political line of our party, chose a different course. It carried the protest against the war into the very midst of the working class; it carried the propaganda against imperialism into the broad mass of Russian proletarians.

It met with a very sympathetic response on the part of the workers which frightened the government and compelled it, in flagrant violation of its own laws, to arrest and sentence our comrade Deputies to life-long exile under police surveillance in Siberia. In its first official communiqué on the arrest of our comrade, the tsarist government wrote:

> A position distinct from all the others was in this respect taken by some members of Social-Democratic societies whose activities aimed at shaking the military power of Russia by way of propaganda against the war, by means of underground appeals and oral propaganda.

To Vandervelde's famous appeal in which he asked the "temporary" cessation of the struggle against tsarism—an appeal which, according to the testimony of the Tsar's ambassador in Belgium, Prince Kudashev, was composed not by Vandervelde alone but in collaboration with that Tsar's ambassador—*only* our party, through its Central Committee, gave a negative reply. The leading centre of the Liquidators agreed with Vandervelde and officially declared in the press that "in its activities it *does not oppose the war.*"

The first accusation made by the tsarist government against our comrades, the Deputies, was that they had conducted propaganda among the workers in favour of a negative reply to Vandervelde.

At the trial, the Tsar's attorney, Mr. Nenarokomov, held up before our comrades the worthy example of the German and French Socialists. "The German Social-Democrats," he said, "voted for military appropriations and proved friends of the government. This is how the German Social-Democrats acted, but this is not how the Don Quixotes of the Russian Social-Democracy acted. . . . The Socialists of Belgium and France at once forgot their party disputes and unhesitatingly took their places under the banners." Quite different was the behaviour of the members of the R.S.-D.L.P. Fraction which acted under the directions of the Central Committee of the party.

The trial unfolded an impressive picture of a widespread illegal anti-war propaganda conducted by our party among the masses of the proletariat. Naturally, the Tsar's court succeeded in "uncover-

ing" only a very small part of the activities of our comrades in this respect. But even the part that was revealed indicated how much had been done in the brief space of several months.

Illegal appeals of our groups and committees against the war and for international tactics were made public at the trial. From the class-conscious workers of all Russia feelers were reaching out to the members of the R.S.-D.L.P. Fraction and the latter utilised all its forces to help the workers understand the war from the standpoint of Marxism.

Comrade Muranov, a Deputy of the workers of the province of Kharkov, said at the trial:

"Knowing that I had been sent by the people to the Imperial Duma not to wear out the Duma chair, I travelled over the provinces to get acquainted with the sentiments of the working class." He also admitted at the trial that he had taken upon himself the functions of an illegal agitator of our party, that in the Ural he organised a workers' committee in the Verkhneisetsk plant and in other places. The trial proved that after the beginning of the war the members of the R.S.-D.L.P. Fraction had travelled over almost all of Russia for the sake of propaganda; that Muranov, Petrovsky, Badayev and others had organised numerous workers' meetings where resolutions against the war were adopted, etc.

The tsarist government threatened the defendants with capital punishment. In view of this, at the trial itself, not all of them stood up as courageously as did Comrade Muranov. They wished to make it difficult for the Tsar's attorneys to convict them. This is now being utilised by the Russian social-chauvinists in an unworthy manner to becloud the substance of the question as to what kind of parliamentarism is needed for the working class. Parliamentarism is being recognised by Südekum and Heine, by Sembat and Vaillant, by Bissolati and Mussolini, by Chkheidze and Plekhanov.

Parliamentarism is also being recognised by our comrades of the R.S.-D.L.P. Fraction; it is being recognised by the Bulgarian and Italian comrades who have split from the chauvinists. There is parliamentarism and parliamentarism. Some utilise the parliamentary arena to curry favour with their government or, at best, to wash their hands of everything, as did Chkheidze's group. Others utilise parliamentarism to remain revolutionists to the very end, to fulfil their duty as Socialists and internationalists even under the most difficult

circumstances. The parliamentarism of the former leads them to ministerial chairs; the parliamentary activity of the latter leads them to prison, exile, hard labour. The former serve the bourgeoisie; the latter, the proletariat. The former are social-imperialists. The latter are revolutionary Marxists.

CHAPTER III

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL

How shall the International be reconstructed? But first a few words as to how the International *must not* be reconstructed.

METHOD OF THE SOCIAL-CHAUVINISTS AND OF THE "CENTRE"

Oh, the social-chauvinists of all countries are great "internationalists"! Since the beginning of the war, they have been burdened with care for the International! On the one hand they assert that the talk about the *collapse* of the International is exaggerated. In reality, they say, nothing in particular has happened. Listen to Kautsky: The International, he says, is simply "an instrument of peace time," and it is not surprising that in war time this instrument proved somewhat deficient. On the other hand, the social-chauvinists of all countries have found one very simple and, what is more, an international, way to get out of the present dilemma. Their remedy is not complicated, indeed; one must only wait, they say, until the end of the war; up to that time the Socialists of every country should defend their "fatherland" and support "their" governments; after the end of the war they should grant each other "amnesty," recognising that *all* were right, that in peace time we live like brothers, while in war time, in strict accordance with such and such resolutions, we call on the German workers to annihilate their French brothers, and vice versa.

This is equally agreed upon by Kautsky and Plekhanov, Victor Adler and Heine. Victor Adler writes that "when we shall have lived through this difficult time, our first duty will be to refrain from calling each other to account for every trifle." Kautsky asserts that "no earnest Socialists of any country have expressed themselves in a manner to make us afraid" of the fate of the International. Plekhanov says, "It is unpleasant to shake the hands" (of the German Social-Democrats) "which reek with the blood of

those innocently murdered," but at the same time he, too, proposes "amnesty": "To subordinate the *heart to reason*," he writes, "would here be entirely in place. For the sake of the great cause of the International, even belated expressions of regret will have to be taken into account." Heine, in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, calls Vandervelde's behaviour "courageous and dignified" and holds it up as an example for the German Left.

In brief, when the war is over, appoint a commission of Kautsky, Plekhanov, Vandervelde, and Adler, and a "unanimous" resolution will momentarily be framed in the spirit of mutual amnesty. The controversy will have been peacefully glossed over. Instead of aiding the workers to understand what happened, they will deceive them by a show of paper "unity." A union of sovial-chauvinists and hypocrites of all countries will be termed the reconstruction of the International.

We must not hide from ourselves the fact that the danger of such "reconstruction" is very great. The social-chauvinists of all countries are equally interested in such an outcome. They are all equally unwilling to allow that the working masses of their respective countries should by themselves gain clarity as to the question: Socialism or nationalism? They are all equally interested in covering up each other's sins. None of them can propose anything outside of what is being proposed by Kautsky, that virtuoso of "international" hypocrisy.

However, this danger is little understood. One year of war has witnessed a series of attempts at re-establishing international connections. We will not speak of the London and Vienna Conferences where outspoken chauvinists gathered to help the general staffs and the bourgeoisie of "their" fatherlands. We have in mind the Lugano and Copenhagen Conferences, the International Women's Conference, and the International Youth Conference. These gatherings were animated by the best intentions, but they entirely failed to see the above danger. They did not map out a fighting line for the internationalists. They did not call the attention of the proletariat to the danger lurking for it in the social-chauvinists' method of "reconstructing" the International. At best, they confined themselves to a repetition of old resolutions without pointing out to the workers that, without a struggle against the social-chauvinists, the cause of Socialism is hopeless. At best they were marking time.

STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE OPPOSITION

The state of affairs in the ranks of the German Social-Democratic opposition is undoubtedly of the greatest interest to all the internationalists. The official German Social-Democracy, formerly the strongest and the leading party of the Second International, has dealt the international organisation of the workers the most telling blow. But it transpires that the opposition within the German Social-Democracy is also the strongest. Of the great European parties, it was in the German party that the comrades who had remained loyal to the banner of Socialism had first raised a loud cry of protest. With joy we read the magazines *Lichtstrahlen* and *Die Internationale;* with still greater joy we have learned of the distribution in Germany of illegal revolutionary appeals such as, for instance, *Der Hauptfeind steht im eigenen Land* [*The Main Enemy Is in Our Own Country*]. This revealed the fact that the spirit of Socialism was alive among the German workers, that there still were men in Germany capable of defending revolutionary Marxism.

The split in modern Socialism has manifested itself most glaringly within German Social-Democracy. We note here three very clearly defined lines: the opportunist-chauvinists who nowhere have sunk to such a level of degradation and renegacy as in Germany; the Kautskyist "centre" which has proven completely incapable of playing any other role than that of a satellite to the opportunists; and the Left which represents the only Social-Democrats in Germany.

We are naturally most interested in the state of affairs inside of the German Left. We see in it our comrades, the hope of all the internationalist elements.

What, then, is that state of affairs?

Die Internationale was perfectly right when it said that within the German Left everything was still in a state of ferment, that great re-groupings were still ahead, that there were in its midst more outspoken and less outspoken elements.

We Russian internationalists, of course, in no way assume to meddle in the internal affairs of our comrades, the German Left. We understand that they alone are perfectly competent to define their methods of struggle against the opportunists in accordance with the conditions of time and place. We only consider it our right

and our duty openly to express our opinion concerning that state of affairs.

We are convinced that the author of the editorial in *Die Internationale* was perfectly right when he said that the Kautskyist "centre" was more harmful to the cause of Marxism than open social-chauvinism. He who at present glosses over discords, who, under the cloak of Marxism, preaches to the workers the things preached by Kautskyism, is merely lulling the workers to sleep, is more pernicious than the Südekums or Heines, who put the question squarely and compel the workers to make up their minds.

The fact that, of late, Kautsky and Haase are allowing themselves to demur against the "higher-ups" should deceive no one. The differences between them and the Scheidemanns are not those of principle. One group assumes that Hindenburg and Mackensen have already won the war and that therefore they can allow themselves the luxury of a protest against annexations. The other group thinks that Hindenburg and Mackensen have not yet won the war and that it is necessary to "see it through."

Kautskyism is conducting a sham fight against the "higher-ups"—in order to be able, when the war is over, to hide from the workers the clash of principles, to plaster up the issue by a thousand and one swollen resolutions in a hazy "Left" spirit (it is known that the diplomats of the Second International are past masters in this kind of work).

It goes without saying that, in its difficult struggle against the "higher-ups," the German opposition must take advantage even of this unprincipled opposition of Kautskyism. A hostile attitude toward neo-Kautskyism, however, must remain the touchstone for every internationalist. Only he is a real internationalist who fights against Kautskyism, who understands that even *after* the so-called change of heart by its leaders, the centre remains in principle an ally of the chauvinists and opportunists.

Generally speaking, our attitude towards the vacillating elements in the International is of tremendous importance. Those elements, namely Socialists of a *pacifist* shade, exist both in the neutral and in some belligerent countries (in England, for instance, the Independent Labour Party). These elements can be our fellow travellers. It is necessary to get closer to them with the aim of fighting the social-chauvinists. But we must remember that they are *only* fellow travellers; that as far as the main and fundamental problems are

concerned, when the International is reconstructed, those same elements will go, not with us, but against us, with Kautsky, Scheidemann, Vandervelde, Sembat. At international conferences we must not confine our programme to what is acceptable to these elements, if we do not wish to become prisoners of the vacillating pacifists. This happened, for instance, at the International Women's Conference in Berne, where the German delegation, adhering to the standpoint of Comrade Clara Zetkin, in practice played the part of a "centre." The Women's Conference said only that which was acceptable to the delegates of the opportunist Dutch party of Troelstra and of the I. L. P., the latter, let us not forget, being the party which at the London Conference of the Entente chauvinists had voted in favour of Vandervelde's resolution. We pay the I. L. P. the tribute of greatest respect for its courageous struggle against the English government in war time. But we know that this party has never accepted the principles of Marxism, while, in our conviction, it is the chief task of the Social-Democratic opposition at the present moment to raise the banner of revolutionary Marxism, to tell the workers, firmly and defiantly, how we look upon imperialist wars, to put forth the slogan of mass revolutionary action, *i.e.*, to turn the period of imperialist war into the beginning of a period of civil wars.

Revolutionary Social-Democratic elements exist in many countries in spite of everything. They exist in Germany, in Russia, and in Scandinavia (an influential trend of opinion represented by Comrade Höglund), in the Balkans (the party of the Bulgarian "Tesnyaks"), in Italy, in England (part of the British Socialist Party), in France (where Vaillant admitted in *L'Humanité* that he had received letters of protest from the internationalists, of which, however, he published none in full), in Holland ("Tribunists"), etc. To unite these Marxian elements, however small their number may be at the beginning, to revive in their name the words of real Socialism now forgotten, to call the workers of all countries to relinquish chauvinism and raise the old banner of Marxism, this is the task of the day.

Hitherto, conferences with so-called programmes of "actions" have confined themselves to a more or less outspoken programme of pure pacifism. Marxism is not pacifism. It is necessary to *fight* for a speedy end of the war. But only through a call to *revolutionary* struggle will the "peace" demand gain proletarian content. Without

a series of revolutions, the so-called democratic peace is a petty-bourgeois Utopia. The only real programme of action, then, would be the Marxian programme which brings the masses a complete and clear understanding of what has happened; which explains what imperialism is and how to fight against it; which declares openly that opportunism has brought about the collapse of the Second International; which appeals to the workers to build up a Marxian International openly without and *against* the opportunists. Only such a programme showing that we believe in ourselves, that we believe in Marxism, that we declare a life and death struggle against opportunism, would sooner or later secure for us the sympathy of the real proletarian masses.

THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY AND THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has long split away from its opportunists. The Russian opportunists have now, in addition, become chauvinists. This only reinforces us in our belief that a split with them is necessary in the interests of Socialism. We are convinced that the present differences between the Social-Democrats and the social-chauvinists are by no means smaller than the differences that existed between the Socialists and Anarchists when the Social-Democrats split away from the latter. An opportunist by the name of Monitor has rightly said in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* [*Prussian Annals*] that the present unity is good for the opportunists and for the bourgeoisie, because it forces the Left to yield to the chauvinists and prevents the workers from getting to the bottom of the controversy and from creating their own real labour party, a real Socialist party. We are firmly convinced that it is the prime duty of a revolutionist in the present conditions to split away from the opportunists and chauvinists. This is just as necessary as the split with the yellows, the anti-Semites, the liberal workers' unions, etc., was necessary in order more quickly to enlighten the backward workers and to draw them into the ranks of the Social-Democratic parties.

It is our opinion that the Third International ought to be created on this revolutionary basis. Our party does not even question any more the expediency of breaking with the social-chauvinists. This question has been decided by it unreservedly. The question that

interests it is how to carry it out in the near future on an international scale.

It is quite obvious that in order to create an *international* Marxist organisation, the separate countries must be ready to create independent local Marxist parties. Germany, the home of the oldest and strongest labour movement, is of decisive importance. The near future will show whether conditions have already become ripe for the creation of a new Marxist International. If so, our party will gladly join such a Third International, purged of opportunism and chauvinism. If not, it will mean that a more or less protracted period of evolution is required before this task of purging is completed. Our party will then be the extreme opposition inside the old International pending a time when the basis for an international association of workers resting on the basis of revolutionary Marxism will have been created in the various countries. We do not and we cannot know which road developments will take in the coming years, internationally. What we know, however, what we are most firmly convinced of, is that in *our* country, amongst *our* proletariat, our party will untiringly work in the indicated direction, that by its daily activities it will be creating the Russian section of a Marxist International.

Russia is at present not lacking in frank social-chauvinists and in groups of the "centre." These people will struggle against the organisation of a Marxist International. We know that Plekhanov accepts the principles of Südekum and is reaching out to join hands with him. We know that the so-called Organisation Committee under Axelrod's leadership is preaching Kautskyism on Russian soil. Under the cloak of unity of the working class those people preach unity with the opportunists and through them with the bourgeoisie. What we know of the present Russian labour movement, however, gives us full assurance that the class-conscious proletariat of Russia will, as hitherto, remain *with our party*.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY OF THE SPLIT, AND THE PRESENT CONDITION OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN RUSSIA

THE tactics of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in relation to the war, as outlined above, represent the inevitable result of thirty years' development of Social-Democracy in Russia. One cannot correctly understand either these tactics or the present situation of Social-Democracy in our country without going deeper into the history of our party. It is for this reason that we must remind the reader of the main data of this history.

As an ideological tendency, Social-Democracy came into existence in 1883 when the Social-Democratic views, as applied to Russia, were for the first time systematically expounded abroad by the Liberation of Labour group. Up to the beginning of the nineties, Social-Democracy remained an ideological tendency without connections with the mass labour movement in Russia. At the beginning of the nineties the spread of political unrest in the country, the fermentation and the strike movement among the workers made Social-Democracy an active political force inseparably connected with the struggle, both economic and political, of the working class. From that moment also begins the split of Social-Democracy into Economists and Iskraists.*

THE ECONOMISTS AND THE OLD "ISKRA" ** (1894-1903)

Economism was an opportunist trend within the Russian Social-Democracy. Its political substance reduced itself to a programme declaring that "economic" struggle is the task of the workers, political struggle that of the liberals. Its main theoretical support was the so-called "legal Marxism" or "Struveism" which recognised a species of "Marxism" entirely purged of revolutionary spirit and adapted to the requirements of the liberal bourgeoisie. Referring to the backwardness of the masses of the workers in Russia, and wishing

* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. IV.—*Ed.*
** *Spark.—Ed.*

"to go with the masses," the Economists confined the task and the scope of the labour movement to economic struggle and to the political support of liberalism, without setting for themselves independent political tasks, or any kind of revolutionary tasks.

The old *Iskra* (1900-1903) victoriously fought Economism in the name of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy. The flower of the class-conscious proletariat went over to the *Iskra* in a body. A few years before the revolution, Social-Democracy advanced a most consistent and uncompromising program. The struggle of the classes, the upheaval of the masses in the course of the 1905 Revolution, proved the correctness of that programme. The Economists had adapted themselves to the backwardness of the masses. The *Iskra* stepped forth as the vanguard of the workers, capable of leading the masses onward. The present-day arguments of the social-chauvinists (necessity of reckoning with the masses, progressivism of imperialism, "illusions" of the revolutionists, etc.) had *all* been advanced by the Economists in their time. The opportunist adulteration of Marxism as Struveism became known to Social-Democratic Russia twenty years ago.

MENSHEVISM AND BOLSHEVISM (1903-1908)

The period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution called forth a new struggle of policies within Social-Democracy, a direct continuation of the former struggle. Economism was transformed into "Menshevism." The defence of the revolutionary tactics of the old *Iskra* created "Bolshevism."

In the stormy years of 1905-1907, Menshevism was an opportunist current supported by the liberal bourgeoisie and introducing liberal bourgeois tendencies into the labour movements. To adapt the struggle of the working class to liberalism, that was its substance. Bolshevism, on the other hand, saw the task of the Social-Democratic workers in arousing the democratic peasantry to a revolutionary struggle in spite of the vacillations and betrayals of Liberalism. It has been repeatedly recognised by the Mensheviks themselves that during the revolution the working masses followed the Bolsheviks in every important undertaking.

The 1905 Revolution confirmed, strengthened, deepened, and hardened the irreconcilably revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics in Russia. Open actions of classes and parties more than once revealed

a connection between Social-Democratic opportunism ("Menshevism") and Liberalism.

MARXISM AND LIQUIDATIONISM (1908-1914)

The period of counter-revolution again placed on the order of the day of Social-Democracy the question of opportunist vs. revolutionary tactics, but in a totally new form. The main body of Menshevism, disregarding the protests of many of its best representatives, gave birth to a policy known as Liquidationism which meant relinquishing the struggle for a new revolution in Russia, relinquishing underground organisation and work, scoffing scornfully at the "underground," at the slogan of a republic, etc. A group of contributors to the legal magazine *Nasha Zarya* (Messrs. Potresov, Cherevanin, etc.) formed a nucleus which, being independent of the old Social-Democratic Party, has in a thousand ways been supported, advertised, and petted by the liberal bourgeoisie of Russia in its attempt to make the Russian workers lose the habit of revolutionary struggle.

This group of opportunists was expelled from the party by the January, 1912, Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which reconstituted the party against the frantic resistance of a number of big and small groups living abroad. For more than two years (beginning of 1912 to the middle of 1914) a tenacious struggle was going on between the two Social-Democratic parties, that is, between the Central Committee which had been elected in January, 1912, and the Organisation Committee which did not recognise the January Conference and wished to reconstitute the party on a different basis while maintaining unity with the group of *Nasha Zarya.* There was a tenacious struggle also between the two daily labour papers (the *Pravda* and *Luch* [*Ray*] and between their respective successors) and between the two Social-Democratic groups in the Fourth Imperial Duma (the R.S.-D.L.P. Fraction of Pravdists or Marxists, and the "Social-Democratic" group of Liquidators led by Chkheidze).

Fighting for loyalty to the revolutionary traditions of the party; sponsoring the new wave of unrest which was mounting among the working class, especially after the spring of 1912; combining legal with illegal organisations, press and propaganda, the Pravdists cemented around themselves an overwhelming majority of the class-

conscious working class, whereas the Liquidators, acting as a political power exclusively through the group of *Nasha Zarya*, based themselves on an all-around support of the liberal bourgeois elements.

Open monetary contributions of the workers' groups to the papers of both parties, being at that time a form of Social-Democratic *membership dues* adapted to Russian conditions (the only one *legally* admitted and publicly controlled) proved in a concrete manner the proletarian source of the "Pravdists'" (Marxists') strength and influence, and the bourgeois-liberal source of the Liquidators (with their Organisation Committee). Here are some figures relative to the contributions, as given at length in the book, *Marxism and Liquidationism*, and in an abbreviated form in the German Social-Democratic paper *Leipziger Volkszeitung* [*Leipzig People's Gazette*], July 21, 1914.

Number and amount of contributions to the daily St. Petersburg papers, the Marxist (Pravdist) and Liquidationist, from Jan. 1 to May 13, 1914.

	Pravdists		Liquidators	
	No. of Contributions	Amount (in rubles)	No. of Contributions	Amount (in rubles)
From workers' groups	2,873	18,934	671	5,296
From other sources	713	2,650	423	6,760

It thus appears that in 1914 our party rallied four-fifths of the class-conscious workers of Russia to the support of the revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics. Throughout the whole year of 1913, the number of contributions from workers' groups was 2,181 for the Pravdists and 661 for the Liquidators. From Jan. 1, 1913, to May 13, 1914, the number of contributions from workers' groups was: Pravdists (*i. e.*, our party) 5,054, Liquidators, 1,332, *i. e.*, 20.8 per cent.

MARXISM AND SOCIAL-CHAUVINISM (1914-1915)

The great European War of 1914-1915 gave the European as well as the Russian Social-Democrats a chance to test the correctness of their tactics by applying them to a world-wide crisis. The reactionary, predatory, slave-driving character of the present war is infinitely more obvious in relation to tsarism than in relation to other governments. Still, the main group of Liquidators (the only one which, aside from ours, has a considerable influence in Russia,

thanks to its liberal connections) turned towards social-chauvinism! Having had for a considerable length of time the monopoly of legality, this group, *Nasha Zarya*, conducted a propaganda among the masses in favour of "not resisting the war," in favour of a victory of the Triple (at present Quadruple) Entente, and accused German imperialism of "extraordinary sins," etc. Plekhanov, who since 1903 has repeatedly shown examples of his utter lack of political character, and who often went over to the opportunists, took this position even more decisively. For this action he is acclaimed by the whole bourgeois press of Russia. So deep has Plekhanov sunk, that he declares the tsarist war to be a just war and is publishing interviews in the government papers of Italy, enticing it to join the war.

Thus it was sufficiently proven that we were right in our understanding of Liquidationism and in excluding the main group of Liquidators from our party. The actual programme of the Liquidators and the actual meaning of their line of action is not only opportunism as such, but a direct defence of the privileges of Russia as a great nation and of the prerogatives of the great Russian landowners and the bourgeoisie. Liquidationism is at present a *national-liberal* trend in the labour movement. It is an alliance of a section of the radical petty bourgeoisie and a negligible number of privileged workers with "their" national bourgeoisie against the masses of the proletariat.

THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS IN RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

As mentioned above, neither the Liquidators nor the numerous groups living abroad (those of Plekhanov, Alexinsky, Trotsky and others), nor the so-called "national" Social-Democrats (of the non-Russian nationalities) recognised our January, 1912, Conference. The accusations that were most often repeated in the numberless invectives hurled at us were "usurpation" and "split." Our reply to these accusations consisted in quoting exact figures and objectively verifiable proof to the effect that our party had united four-fifths of the class-conscious workers of Russia. Not a small achievement under the hardships of illegal work in a counter-revolutionary period.

If unity were possible in Russia on the basis of Social-Democratic

tactics without excluding the group of *Nasha Zarya*, why has this unity not been accomplished by our numberless opponents *at least among themselves?* Three and a half years have passed since January, 1912, and during all this time our opponents, while wishing it ardently, were in no position to create a Social-Democratic party against us. This is the best defence of our party.

The history of those Social-Democratic groups which struggle against our party is a history of breakdown and degeneration. In March, 1912, all of them, without exception, "united" in reviling us. In August, 1912, however, when the so-called "August Bloc" against us was created, disintegration set in. Part of their groups split away. They were in no position to create a party and a Central Committee. What they created was an Organisation Committee "for the re-establishment of unity." In reality, this Organisation Committee proved an ineffective shield for the Liquidationist group in Russia. Through the whole period of a tremendous rising wave of the labour movement in Russia and of the mass strikes of 1912-1914 the only group of the August Bloc which conducted work among the masses was *Nasha Zarya*, whose strength is in its liberal connections. At the beginning of 1914, the August Bloc was formally relinquished by the Lettish Social-Democrats (the Polish Social-Democrats did not belong to it), whereas Trotsky, one of the leaders of the Bloc, relinquished it informally, having created his own separate group. In July, 1914, at a conference in Brussels with the participation of the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau, also Kautsky and Vandervelde, the so-called Brussels Bloc was formed against us; it was not joined in by the Letts and immediately after its formation was relinquished by the Polish Social-Democrats, who belong to the opposition. After the beginning of the war this Bloc broke up. *Nasha Zarya*, Plekhanov, Alexinsky, and the leader of the Caucasian Social-Democrats, An, became open social-chauvinists, preaching the desirability of a German defeat. The Organisation Committee and the Bund defend social-chauvinists and the foundations of social-chauvinism. Chkheidze's fraction, having voted against military appropriations (in Russia even the bourgeois democrats, the Trudoviks, voted against them), nevertheless remained a loyal ally of *Nasha Zarya*. Our extreme social-chauvinists, Plekhanov, Alexinsky and Co., are perfectly satisfied with Chkheidze's fraction. In Paris, a paper *Nashe Slovo* (formerly *Golos*) is being founded, with Martov and Trotsky as the

main contributors, both wishing to combine a platonic defence of internationalism with an unconditional demand of unity with *Nasha Zarya*, the Organisation Committee, or Chkheidze's fraction. Having published 250 issues, the paper is compelled to admit its disintegration: one part of the editorial staff is heading towards our party, Martov "remaining loyal" to the Organisation Committee, which publicly denounces the *Nashe Slovo* for "Anarchism" (in the same way as the opportunists of Germany, David and Co., the *Internationale Korrespondenz* [*International Correspondence*], Legien and Co., accuse Comrade Liebknecht of Anarchism); Trotsky makes known his breach with the Organisation Committee, but he wishes to go together with the Chkheidze fraction. Here is the programme of Chkheidze's fraction as expressed by one of its leaders. In No. 5 of the *Sovremenny Mir* [*Contemporary World*] of 1915, a magazine of Plekhanov's and Alexinsky's orientation, Chkhenkeli writes: *"To say that German Social-Democracy was in a position to prevent the military action of its country but failed to do so, would mean either covertly to wish that it should exhale on the barricades not only its own last breath but the last breath of its fatherland as well, or to look at things near-by through an Anarchist's telescope."* *

These few lines express the sum and substance of social-chauvinism: a justification, in principle, of the "defence of the fatherland" idea in the present war; mockery, by permission of the military censors, at the advocacy of and preparation for a revolution. Whether the German Social-Democracy was capable of preventing the war, whether the revolutionists are, in general, capable of guaranteeing the success of a revolution, is beside the point. The question is, should we conduct ourselves as Socialists or should we actually "exhale our last breath" in the embrace of the imperialist bourgeoisie?

TASKS OF OUR PARTY

Social-Democracy in Russia came into being before the bourgeois democratic revolution (1905) and became strong during the revolution and counter-revolution. The backwardness of Russia explains the unusual abundance of currents and shades of petty-bourgeois

* *Sovremenny Mir*, No. 5, 1915, p. 148. Trotsky has recently declared that he thinks it his task to raise the authority of Chkheidze's fraction in the International. Chkhenkeli undoubtedly will just as energetically raise the authority of Trotsky in the International.

opportunism in our country, whereas the influence of Marxism in Europe and the solidity of the legal Social-Democratic parties prior to the war turned our exemplary liberals into near-admirers of the "sensible," "European" ("non-revolutionary") "Marxist" theory and Social-Democracy. The working class of Russia could build up its party in no other way than by resolutely fighting for thirty years against all varieties of opportunism. The experience of the World War which has brought about the ignominious collapse of European opportunism, and which sealed the alliance of our national liberals with social-chauvinist Liquidationism, confirms us in our conviction that our party must in the future follow the same straight revolutionary road.

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